

## The Stamp Collectors' Fortnightly,

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Our New Season Number is published perhaps a little too soon for some of our readers. The continuance of fine weather has had the natural effect of lengthening the time devoted to holiday-making; but whether the philatelic public is quite ready for it or not, here the New Season Number is! And we hope it will be welcome. True, it is not such a bumping New Season Number as we published in the autumn of last year, but that is mainly owing to the earlier date of publication. Between now and Christmas we shall present the readers of the *Fortnightly* with numbers which will fully atone for the somewhat attenuated issues of the "off season." Meantime, our heartiest thanks are tendered to the many readers who have helped us with interesting items and news cuttings for this number.

The Junior Philatelic Society's present membership constitutes, we believe, a record for this country. In America stamp societies over 500 members are no new thing, and on the continent, of course, there is the evergreen Dresden Society with the largest membership of any Philatelic Society in the world. Now what is the highest total the virile and pushful "J.P.S." can hope to achieve? A thousand? Fifteen hundred? Two thousand? No one can definitely say, but it is evident that the officials of this growing society have good ground for the faith that is in them. The boom that began with the holding of the Exhibition of British Stamps at Exeter Hall continues unabated. The membership, at the last count, had reached 468 and was "still growing." We congratulate Mr. Melville, Mr. Johnson, and their coadjutors on a success that is thoroughly well deserved. In this number, by the way, we publish the Society's full programme for the ensuing season.

Should "Punctured Officials" be collected? Many of us say no; the "West End Philatelist" says yes.

One weighty argument [remarks our contemporary] brought forward against punctured varieties is that the punctures spoil the stamps. This is particularly childish, for one might say exactly the same about surcharged, or even used, stamps; and it would not be hard to prove that a bisected provisional is even more spoilt. Then, again, we are told we should not collect these varieties because the punctures might easily be forged. Ye gods! One might say the same of any and every stamp in existence, and with almost as much reason. The danger from this source is so remote that it is worth discussing.

To that pronouncement we can hardly assent. The danger may be remote, but it is a far more real danger than any other form of forgery, since we believe it has been demonstrated that the punctures can be imitated with absolute fidelity. If, however, the "West End Philatelist" does not quite convince us as to the desirability of collecting these varieties, it certainly scores neatly off Messrs. Stanley Gibbons' Catalogue by showing that that able but not always consistent work taboos punctured British Official stamps while providing full lists of the "T" stamps of Tunis!

## "A Philatelist in a Quandary."

SOME FURTHER CORRESPONDENCE.

ON the subject of our editorial article, "A Philatelist in a Quandary," in the *Fortnightly* of August 26th, some further interesting letters are to hand.

## AN AMERICAN VIEW.

A prominent American philatelist who does not wish his name to appear, commends the advice we tendered to "A.S.F."—the perplexed philatelist whose letter gave rise to our article.

Your advice [writes this gentleman] is just right. I have had a number of experiences of this sort, and always buy the stuff at the price asked, and then tell them that I found some good things in it which have been overlooked, and send them a cheque for the balance. This makes them feel happy, and insures my getting the goods at a fair price. You will, of course, not use my name in connection with this letter, but I feel sure that you will be glad to have someone agree with you.

We are glad, although the advice we gave is perhaps open to the charge of being Jesuitical in its nature. But as Mr. C. F. Purdom remarked in our last issue, each individual case must be judged separately, and we gave our correspondent what we took to be the wisest counsel in the curious circumstances in which he was placed.

## A BIRMINGHAM OPINION.

That we cannot all think alike is proverbial, and is well evidenced by a letter since received from a Birmingham reader, who asks us "what hypocritical nonsense" he may next "expect to read in the columns of the *Stamp Collectors' Fortnightly*." The obvious course for any collector to pursue, he declares, is to buy his stamps as cheaply as he can, "and if the other man doesn't know what they're worth, well so much the better for you!" But it is becoming a very rare thing (he plaintively adds) to find a man who doesn't know the values of rare stamps!

## A DISCLAIMER BY "FARTHING GREY."

One of the expressions of opinion quoted in the last *Fortnightly*, was that of "Farthing Grey," who now writes us as follows:—

I was rather surprised to see my somewhat uncouth remarks on the subject of "A Philatelist in a Quandary," printed in *extenso* in the current S.C.F.

As my remarks are, I think, open to misconstruction, perhaps you will allow me to say that my views are best embodied in a resolution passed some time ago by the Junior Philatelic Society and which reads as follows:

"That this Society consider the practice of depriving the ignorant of their property, the value of which they have not understood, is justifiable to the extent that a philatelist's knowledge is his own property, and that he is at liberty to refuse to give it away when buying, though he is not at liberty to tell or act lies; but that when the motive for sale is clearly imperative poverty it is not justifiable to buy below value."

With this resolution my ideas are in complete accord. I consider "A.S.F." would be within his rights in purchasing the collection in question for the sum named, for we are not given to understand that the motive for sale is "clearly imperative poverty," or other similar reason. Were it so, the case would be different.

That one is not at liberty to tell or act lies is a fact patent to most; for the rest, I would commend the above mentioned resolution to the consideration of any "Philatelist in a Quandary."

The resolution of the Junior Philatelic Society will be well within the recollection of most readers of the *Fortnightly*, and doubtless it is a very interesting expression of sentiment, but if "Farthing Grey" and others will read our article again, they will see that "A.S.F.'s" trouble was not so much a question of purchasing a collection at less than its value; it was a question whether "A.S.F." could safely offer a fair value (as he honestly desired to do) without driving the owner of the stamps away by putting into his head an idea that his property was of a higher value still.